



For Immediate Release

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***ENZI ANNOUNCES INTRODUCTION OF BILL TO RENEW,
STRENGTHEN CRITICAL HEAD START ACT***

Washington, D.C. - U.S. Senator Mike Enzi (R-WY), Ranking Member of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee, today announced introduction of the "Head Start for School Readiness Act," S. 556, legislation that will improve Head Start programs and ensure that "all children, regardless of background, enter school ready to learn and succeed."

"Early childhood development is often a key indicator of how a student will perform throughout elementary school," Enzi said. "We must maximize the impact of the Head Start program to provide children with the building blocks for success and lay the foundation for high achievement."

S. 556, introduced by Enzi, Senator Ted Kennedy (D-MA), Chairman of the HELP Committee, Senator Chris Dodd (D-CT), Chairman of the Children and Families Subcommittee, and Senator Lamar Alexander (R-TN), Ranking Member of the Children and Families Subcommittee, sets clear goals and standards for Head Start programs, improves coordination with other early childhood education programs, and strengthens program accountability.

"For many students, Head Start is the beginning of a lifetime of learning opportunities. It is vital that we set clear goals and standards for this critical first step to ensure that these children can develop the knowledge and skills they need to learn and succeed in school. We must also strengthen standards for Head Start teachers to ensure that Head Start programs maximize the impact they have on children."

S. 556 will increase the accountability of Head Start programs by strengthening the role of Head Start governing bodies while preserving the role of the policy councils and parents in the operations of Head Start programs.

Key provisions of the "Head Start for School Readiness Act" include:

- Strengthening the accountability of Head Start programs to ensure the continued high quality of programs and services for children and families.

- Focusing on the coordination and collaboration of Head Start with other early childhood education programs.
- Enhancing the quality of the Head Start workforce.

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